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CARDINAL WOLSEY.

THE English county of Suffolk has but few great men to boast of. But it may rejoice in the name of Wolsey, who was born at Ipswich in the month of March, 1471. Common report makes his father a butcher; of this we have no certain proof. The worthy and painful Mr. Groves took three journeys to Ipswich, for the purpose of acquiring information relative to the Wolsey family, but with little success. All he could gather was, that Wolsey's father's name was Robert—no very valuable addition to historical lore. Cavendish says Wolsey was "an honest poor man's son." We are inclined, however,

cess of blundering common to the agricultural mind, and with which the student of history is well acquainted, what was done by the father was attributed to his more eminent son. It is highly improbable that Wolsey spent any of his time at his father's trade. At the age of fifteen we find him a student at Oxford, and already in possession of his Bachelor of Arts' degree; and before that time he certainly would not have been selected to drive cattle a distance of thirty or forty miles. A little while after, the "boy bachelor," as he was termed, became Fellow of Magdalen College (the funds of which



HENRY VIII. DISMISSING CARDINAL WOLSEY.

to the belief that the common opinion was correct, and that Wolsey's father was a butcher. Actually, at this very day, there is a butcher in the flourishing town of Ipswich of the same name. A local tradition yet prevalent in his native county also strengthens this report. On the east coast of Suffolk, not far from Southwold, may be yet seen Wolsey's bridge, as it is called in memory of the cardinal. The tale is, that when a boy, driving some cattle, he nearly lost his life there, in consequence of which, when he became great, he ordered the bridge to be built. We are inclined to think that the bridge might have been built by the father, and that, by a pro-

college he appears to have misappropriated for the purpose of building its tower), and tutor to the three sons of the Marquis of Dorset. From his father he obtained his first preferment, the rectory of Lymington, in Somersetshire. There a neighbouring justice subjected him to the disgraceful punishment of confinement in the stocks, in consequence of a riot at a fair, in which our young divine took a somewhat unclerical part. Years after, when Wolsey became Lord Chancellor, Sir Amias Paulet, the justice referred to, found that Wolsey had neither forgotten nor forgiven the act. This affair we can easily imagine made Lymington a very undesirable residence for

Wolsey. Accordingly, he left it, and became one of the domestic chaplains of Archbishop Dean. On the death of that prelate he went to Calais, where Sir Richard Nanfan, the treasurer, was so struck with his talents for business, as to recommend him to the patronage of the king. The recommendation was not given in vain. Wolsey became one of the chaplains of the court. Soon after, the living of Redgrave, in the diocese of Norwich, was given him, and he obtained the friendship of Fox, Bishop of Winchester, at that time Privy Seal, and of Sir Thomas Lovell, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. The career of our hero seems to have been prosperous from the very commencement. Before some men rise they are brought down almost to the depths of despair. They have to struggle with everything that can break the heart. The great Sam Johnson walked the streets of London with an empty stomach and a yet emptier purse. So have done many of our illustrious great. Hitherto Wolsey had had no opportunity of evincing to the king his capacity for public business. An opportunity now offered. A treaty of marriage was pending between Margaret, the dowager queen of Savoy, and Henry VII. It was necessary to send some one to her father, Maximilian, the emperor. Fox and Lovell recommended Wolsey, who accordingly went. Wolsey made such haste as to return before the king thought he had commenced his journey, and reported the business of his mission with so much clearness and propriety, that he received universal praise; and when the deanery of Lincoln became vacant, it was spontaneously given to Wolsey by the king.

On the 22nd of April, 1509, died Henry VII., and his only surviving son, Henry VIII., ascended the throne. The favour shown Wolsey by the father was continued by the son. In the war with France which was shortly after undertaken by Henry at the instigation of the restless Julius II., Wolsey accompanied his royal master in the humble but useful office of commissariat; and when Tournay yielded to the English arms, Wolsey was made its bishop. In the forty-fifth year of his age, Wolsey was advanced to the dignity of cardinal, and was installed in Westminster Abbey with more than regal pomp. About the same time the great seal was given him for life, with the dignity of chancellor of the realm. His power now became immense; in fact, he was the real monarch. Henry's will was but a reflection of his own. There were times, however, when Henry differed from the cardinal, as the reader of the first volume of "The State Papers" will soon perceive. However, when they did differ, Henry was generally in the wrong; so that we must not blame him if, with a few exceptions, he gave himself up to the pleasures of the court and the chase, and left Wolsey to direct the affairs of state. In that dark barbarous time, men only revered rank and power as it was robed in splendour. To the taste of the age, in this respect, Wolsey scrupulously conformed. His household establishment was conducted on the most princely scale; according to Cavendish, it consisted of a hundred and eighty persons. No wonder that Salisbury-square, a large piece of ground on the south side of Fleet-street, London, takes up but a part of the ground on which at one time stood his mansion—which formerly belonged to Empson, but was given to Wolsey by the master he had served so well. Subsequently Wolsey appears to have lived in York-place, near Whitehall—a palace belonging to the see of York, borrowed by Henry when Anne Boleyn lived at Suffolk House, next door, and which, owing to a defect in the royal memory, has been ever since retained by the crown. Wolsey's revenues at this time must have been equal to those of his master. They were derived from the fines in the legantine court, the archbishopric of York, the bishopric of Winchester, and the abbey of St. Albans, with several other English bishoprics, which were held by foreigners, but assigned to him at low rents for granting them the privilege of living abroad; together with pensions from the Spanish emperor and the French king, the emoluments of the chancellorship, the revenues of the bishoprics of Badajoz and Placenzia in Spain, with rich occasional presents from all the allies of the king, and the wealth and domains of forty dissolved monasteries. His house exhibited the finest productions

of art; the walls of his chambers were hung with cloth of gold and tapestry still more precious. The sons of the nobility attended him as pages, and, as Mr. Galt says, "the daily service of the household corresponded to the opulence and ostentation of the master." Abroad he was yet more pompous and magnificent. His progress was a royal one. His daily visits to Westminster Hall, or his Sunday ones to Greenwich, where his royal master then resided, were conducted with a pomp and splendour never equalled before or since.

When Leo the Tenth died, Wolsey aspired to the tiara, but the French and Spanish cardinals joined, and Adrian, the tutor of Charles, was elected to the vacant dignity. Charles united with Henry a second time, and war was again to be declared with France; but how was the money for the war to be obtained? The feudal system was dying out, and it was to the credit of Wolsey that he introduced the financial system which has lasted in England to the present day. He met the clergy, and then the representatives of the people, and prevailed upon them to pass an income tax. War with France was accordingly commenced. The campaign, however, failed of any practical result. Charles V. was fighting with more success. Henry rejoiced in his victories till he fancied the balance of power was destroyed by the battle of Pavia, when he, with a chivalry worthy a better cause, went over and sided once more with the French; but no advantage resulted from this change, and the people, heavily taxed, fearful of losing what trade they had by a war with Charles, disliking the alliance with France, began to murmur against the cardinal. Many of the nobility also, whom he had eclipsed, looked at him with unloving eyes. The clergy owed him no good will, for they felt that he had hurt them in two ways: he had endeavoured to make them bear their share of the national burdens, from which they had hitherto been exempted; and he had endeavoured to curb their gross licentiousness of conduct. Wolsey leant upon a bruised reed. His apparent power and splendour were maintained only by the single will of the king, and that king more headstrong and wayward than any man who had hitherto sat upon the English throne; that king, one whose "royal nature," as Wolsey himself said, would lead him to endanger the half of his kingdom rather than want any part of his pleasure; that king, one before whom the proud cardinal had so humbled himself, as often to kneel for three hours together, that he might dissuade him from his will, but in vain. Let but that fickle and imperious will conceive that the cardinal stood between it and the gratification of its appetites; let it but shift to some other subject; let it be but cooled down by indifference and neglect, and Wolsey's fall was inevitable and sure. Already the signs of a coming storm had loomed in the distance and blackened the horizon. Between Wolsey and his royal master more than one misunderstanding had occurred, but Wolsey, blinded by success, little understood how to avert the impending peril. The editors of "The State Papers" conjecture that the conduct of Wolsey in the election of an abbot for the monastery of Wilton occasioned a coolness on the part of Henry which was never removed; and yet within a very short time after, we find Wolsey petitioning the king for a valuable preferment for himself and his natural son. It is true that on his last embassy he seems to have foreseen the coming change; but the wonder is not that he saw it then, but that he had not seen it before. He had seen Empson and Dudley—both of whom he had known as the grasping servants of a grasping king—given up to popular vengeance. He had seen Surrey distanced by himself. He might have seen that sooner or later his hour would come. His own knowledge of human nature might have told him that the man who could be false to the wife of his bosom could also be false to the minister of his choice.

And this time speedily arrived. It was given to Wolsey to feel what others had learnt before him, the proverbial ingratitude of men who sat upon thrones. That gay and giddy Anne, for whose sake he discarded the Pope's authority, and who basked a few short years in the sunshine of royal favour, till she also cloyed and was thrown away, bore the cardinal no

good will, as he would have kept her from the dangerous eminence at which she aimed. To preserve herself, she felt that the power of the cardinal must be destroyed. Hence it was, that Wolsey was banished from the royal presence, and that Henry was prevailed upon never more to see the man who had served him faithfully—who had pandered to his pleasures—who had promoted his interests for nearly twenty years. Wolsey did not long survive the blow. Late one autumn evening, a weary cavalcade stopped at the door of Leicester Abbey. "Father," said a broken-hearted, sunken man, "I am come to lay my bones among you." When the morrow's sun sank down the cardinal was no more.

Yet Wolsey deserved the honours he had won. Compared with his contemporaries he appears to advantage. He acted no assassin's part, as did Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. He plotted no treason, as did Buckingham. Oxford and the College of Physicians yet remain to show how much he would have done for the people over whom he ruled. Never was man condemned by an English parliament on lighter grounds. What he had done, he did under the cognisance of the king. His great blunder was, that he did not see what his knowledge of Henry's character ought to have led him to perceive, that to obtain Anne, Henry was prepared to violate every duty, and to burst through every moral and prudential restraint. Even here he blundered, in common with Campeggio and Clement VII., and to that blunder we owe the Reformation. Undoubtedly Wolsey was fashioned to much honour from his cradle. He had the rare skill, not only to attract men's admiration, but to retain their affections. His personal demeanour was that of a prince. The heir of a hundred kings could not have conducted himself with a haughtier mien and a more regal pomp.

Wolsey's moral character, tried by the standard of the present day, deserves the severest condemnation. Selfish, arrogant, voluptuous, in the day of his pride, he was craven-hearted in the dark hour of his disgrace. Tried by the standard of his own times, he was neither a saint nor a fiend; and he was better than most of his own class. Most of the courtiers of Henry had his vices—none his redeeming merits. It is easy for us to condemn him, but it is evidently unfair. We must not judge the men of the past by the light of the present. If they walked not according to the principles of their day, let them be reproached; but not otherwise. The time does in some degree mould the man; over most it tyrannises with an iron hand. There have been better poets than Chaucer—better printers than Caxton—better statesmen than Wolsey; but we still quote their names with respect, because in their day they were each the first of their class. To Wolsey's credit it must be remembered, that those who knew him best clung to him to the last—that when he was weighed down by misfortune and disgrace, Cromwell eloquently pleaded his cause—and that to Cavendish we are indebted for the most faithful picture of his life. Wolsey was Henry's better angel, and, left to himself, Henry became that odious monster—that blot and stain upon the annals of the old country he has ever since remained. It was not till the cardinal's death that the English people really learnt the character of their imperious and besotted king. Wolsey

"Was a scholar, and a ripe and good one,
Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading;
Lofty and sour to them that loved him not;
But to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.

And though he was unsatisfied in getting
(Which was a sin), yet in bestowing
The most princely. Ever witness for him
Ipswich and Oxford. One of which fell with him,
The other, though unfinished, yet so famous,
So excellent in art, and still so rising,
That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue.
His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him;
For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
And found the blessedness of being little;
And to add greater honour to his age
Than man could give him; he died fearing God!"

Thus writes one, whose "Henry VIII." is still worthy of study, as the best history of that time.

CAPRIFICATION.

THE inhabitants of the islands of the Archipelago derive their chief subsistence from dried figs, which they eat with barley-bread. Hence it is an object of importance to them to promote the fructification of the fig-trees. They have two kinds, the cultivated and the wild fig-tree. The former bears fruit only once a year; but the figs grow in such abundance that they would injure each other, and never reach maturity, if art were not resorted to. The wild fig-tree bears three crops of fruit a year, the figs being unfit to eat, but useful for ripening the produce of the cultivated fig-tree, by the process of caprification. Wild fig-trees begin to bear their first or autumn crop in August. These figs continue till November without ripening. Little worms are engendered from eggs deposited by a species of very small ichneumon flies, of a glossy black colour, which fly round the tree for a long time. In the months of October and November these worms, having in their turn become flies, pierce the second or winter crop of figs which appear in September. The autumn figs fall a little after the flies come out; the winter figs remain on the tree till the month of May, containing the eggs deposited by the flies which have come out of the autumn figs. In the month of May the spring figs begin to appear. When they have attained to a certain size and the eye begins to open, they are pricked in that part by the flies reared in the winter figs.

In the months of June or July, when the worms which are engendered in the figs of the third or spring crop are about to change into flies, the peasants gather these wild figs, stick them upon a sort of skewers, and put them on the cultivated fig-trees which are then in blossom. The flies which come out of the wild fig-trees, after being thus transferred, enter the cultivated fig, carrying with them the pollen or fructifying dust which they collected in moving about among the stamens of the wild fig blossoms, and introduce it to the very centre of the fruit in which they are about to deposit their eggs. The entrance of these flies produces a double effect—first that of conveying to the cultivated fig the pollen of the wild fig; and next that of causing a sort of irritation which attracts the fluid to the parts where they are, and where they lay their eggs, thus occasioning an abnormal enlargement. We see something analogous to this in pears, which, when they have been pierced by insects and contain worms inside, grow larger more quickly than the rest. It is a little surprising to see the Greeks taking so much trouble about figs; but we must bear in mind that they form a large part of their food, and that therefore quantity is of more consequence than quality.

AMATEUR ARTISTS.

SOVEREIGNS and other eminent personages have not unfrequently been glad to seek relief from the pressure of weightier affairs in the cultivation of art. A long list of distinguished names might be drawn up to which this remark is applicable. The royal family of France has been peculiarly rich in such names. It is with great probability supposed that Charlemagne—the founder of the Germanic empire, and the head of

the Carolingian dynasty of French sovereigns—spent some of his leisure hours in the illumination of missals. Among other members of this family who have occupied themselves in such pursuits, may be mentioned the Grand Dauphin, son of Louis XIV.; one of the Dukes of Burgundy, who, about the years 1694 and 1698, executed several engravings from the works of distinguished artists; Louis Charles of Bourbon,